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COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

MAINSTREAMING THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO ALL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

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INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

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ECOSOC
Substantive session 1997
C - Coordination segment
Item 4 of the provisional agenda

COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

(a) Mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

Written statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union

At the invitation of the Parliament of India, the Inter-Parliamentary Union held, from 14 to 18 February 1997 in New Delhi, a Specialised Inter-Parliamentary Conference on « *Towards Partnership between Men and Women in Politics* ». In a resolution on the follow-up to this Conference, adopted on 15 April 1997 in Seoul, the Inter-Parliamentary Union subsequently made arrangements for mechanisms to see to it that the concerns of women and men are taken into account equally in all aspects of national policies and in all of the activities of the Union itself.

In this connection, **the main recommendations set out in the resolution - which could inspire similar steps within the United Nations system** - are as follows:

The Inter-Parliamentary Council (...)

5. *Notes* that the work of the Conference clearly showed that political life is still dominated by men and that the majority of parliamentary assemblies are still overwhelmingly or entirely composed of men, and *points out with interest* that the debates made it possible to identify proposals for practical measures to remedy this unsatisfactory situation; *urges* that such measures are taken, notably by governments, parliaments and political parties, so that politics may better reflect and interpret the national population in its dual composition and is carried out in a spirit of partnership, a consolidating factor of democracy;

6. *Urges* those countries in which women are barred by law to take part in the electoral process to remove this obstacle and to utilise the measures recommended by the New Delhi Conference so as to advance women's participation in politics;

7. *Notes with particular interest* that for the first time in the history of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, an equal proportion of men and women MPs took part in the New Delhi Conference, which greatly contributed to the value of the debates and strengthens the validity of the recommendations adopted;

8. *Wishes* that all the work of the Inter-Parliamentary Union will henceforth take into account more constantly and explicitly than in the past the need to act in the spirit of partnership between men and women; and *decides*, with this in mind, to establish within the Executive Committee, without financial implications, a partnership-watch group consisting of a maximum of two women and two men, entrusted with seeing to

it that the interests and visions of both parts of the population are taken into account equally; the biannual report to the IPU Council on the activities of the Executive Committee should include information on the work of this partnership-watch group and action taken on its recommendations;

9. *Calls on* this partnership-watch group to hold in-depth consultations on the possibility of establishing in the Union a rule which would apply equally to all delegations failing to include at least one woman among their members and which would decrease by two the number of votes to which those delegations would be entitled at the IPU Conference; *requests* the group to present its conclusions to the Executive Committee in April 1998 at the latest;

10. *Recommends* that, within each drafting committee of the Study Committees of the IPU Conference, two to four members (the number of men and women being equal) be specifically entrusted with ensuring that the interests and visions of both parts of the population are taken into account equally;

11. *Encourages* each parliament, particularly at the level of its bureau or governing body, to take measures similar to those set out in the above paragraphs; (...);

13. *Also suggests* the creation in each country of organisations whose main mission would be to encourage and prepare women and men to contribute to national politics in a spirit of partnership and which would draw from the talents and experience of trainers of either sex (...).

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REPORTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES: HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

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PROMOTING GREATER RESPECT AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN GENERAL AND IN PARTICULAR FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Excerpts from the resolution adopted without a vote by the 96th Inter-Parliamentary Conference
(Beijing, 20 September 1996)

The 96th Inter-Parliamentary Conference,

Emphasizing the responsibility of all nations, in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, to promote and encourage respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people, regardless of race, colour, sex, language, religious belief or social position [.....],

Noting with satisfaction that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action reiterate that the right to development is a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of human rights [.....],

Underlining that the current world economic order is still unjust, and therefore hinders the realization of human rights [.....] and adversely affects women and children in particular,

Expressing deep concern about the deterioration of living conditions in developing countries [.....] and, in particular, about the harmful effects of economic hardship and a heavy foreign debt burden on the developing countries,

Recalling that the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action emphasize that the human rights of women and children are an indispensable and inalienable part of universal human rights,

Recalling:

- The Declaration and Plan of Action on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children adopted at the World Summit for Children [.....]

- The commitments [.....] set out in the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Summit for Social Development [.....]

Recalling further the [.....] work of the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995) [.....],

Conscious that while some countries have made tangible efforts to attain equality between men and women and achieved noticeable results, others have failed to make adequate efforts [.....],

Deeply concerned at the many forms of discrimination and violence against women and children [.....] requiring nations and the international community to take immediate and effective remedial measures [.....],

Aware that the number of economically exploited children has increased substantially over the last five years and that their working conditions have seriously deteriorated [.....],

Conscious that the causes of child labour are primarily rooted in poverty [.....],

Recognizing that people with disabilities, in particular children, face additional barriers to the equal enjoyment of human rights,

Reaffirming the principle set out in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that efforts to solve the problems concerning children, in particular the girl child, should give priority to non-discrimination and the best interests of children, and take account of the opinions of children,

Welcoming the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women which emphasizes that violence against women constitutes infringement upon, hindrance to and denial of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women,

Noting with concern that there are many political prisoners and displaced persons as a result of terrorism and armed conflict in the world [.....],

Drawing attention in particular to the following texts adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Conferences:

- Resolution on the protection of the rights of children (1989),
- Resolution on policies to put an end to violence against children and women (1991),
- Plan of Action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life (1994),
- Resolution on parliamentary action for women's access to and participation in decision-making structures aimed at achieving true equality for women (1995),
- Resolution on strategies for effective implementation of national and international commitments adopted at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen (1995),

1. *Calls on* all governments to intensify their efforts to remove obstacles to the realization of human rights[.....], to strengthen international co-operation, to promote mutual understanding through dialogue and to promote and protect human rights on the basis of equality and mutual respect;

2. *Also calls on* all States to establish or [.....] to strengthen national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights and to ensure that these institutions are independent of government [.....];

3. *Further calls on* all governments and UN bodies to strengthen their co-operation [.....];

4. *Urges* the governments of the industrialized countries to end cuts in official development assistance and instead to aim at the target set by the United Nations (from 0.7 percent to 1 percent of GNP), [.....];

5. *Calls on* all countries, UN bodies, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to [.....] establish fair and just (trade) relations between all countries of the world;

6. *Emphasizes* the need for creditor countries to take effective measures to cancel or reduce the debt burden of developing countries and eventually solve their debt problems;

7. *Urges* all governments to promote the protection of the human rights of women and girls by taking effective measures to implement fully the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[.....], and all parliaments to follow up on the commitment they undertook in the Beijing Parliamentary Declaration [.....];

8. *Appeals* to countries which have not yet done so to accede to or ratify [.....] the UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and *urges* the States parties to these instruments to take all necessary [.....] measures to implement the above Conventions effectively;

9. *Urges* all countries to formulate and implement their plans of action according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Declaration and Plan of Action on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children [.....];

10. *Calls on* parliaments and governments [.....] and the international community to take emergency measures to protect the rights of the child and particularly those of girls [.....];

11. *Strongly condemns* the conscription and recruitment of children in armed forces or armed groups [.....], as a violation of fundamental human rights requiring the punishment of those responsible for such heinous acts;

12. *Recommends* that parliaments and governments adopt and implement a programme setting out standards for the protection of women and children living in zones of national or international conflicts, of which they are the main victims [.....];

13. *Appeals* to all governments to use more effective measures [.....] to ensure that child prostitution and child pornography are consistently condemned and eliminated by society on a global scale [.....];

15. *Calls on* national parliaments, governments and the international community to initiate an open in-depth debate with a view to the adoption of measures that will tackle the root causes of child labour [.....];

16. *Urges* national parliaments and governments to ensure the provision of compulsory primary education and health care which are accessible to all [.....];

17. *Calls on* States to recognize the important and constructive role that non-governmental organizations can play and to support their efforts aimed at enhancing promotion and respect of human rights;

18. *Also calls on* States where appropriate to provide advisory and technical services [.....];

19. *Requests* the United Nations to consider the implications of trade-related sanctions with a view to addressing their negative impact on women and children;

20. *Rejects* any coercive or unilateral measures [.....], applied by one country against another, since such measures ultimately penalize men, women and children who are alien to political controversies and interests and should therefore be regarded as an infringement of human rights;

21. *Calls on* parliaments and governments worldwide to strongly condemn and combat drug production and trafficking and terrorism [.....];

22. *Also calls on* parliaments and governments to introduce programmes of positive action and education to ensure non-discrimination and equal enjoyment of human rights [.....];

24. *Strongly condemns* sexual violence including in armed conflicts, particularly the use of rape as an instrument of terror, forced prostitution and all other forms of sexual aggression, *recommends* that all parliaments and governments take emergency action to confront and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls; and *recommends* that the United Nations further extend the powers of the international tribunals to ensure that States and individuals are held accountable for such crimes;

25. *Calls on* States to exercise diligence to make sure that violence is not occurring in the home and schools and to stop invoking customs, traditions or religion to avoid their obligation to eliminate violence against women and children;

26. *Recommends* that all parliaments and governments provide constitutional guarantees, promulgate and implement proper laws to prohibit sexual discrimination against all women and girls of all ages [.....];

27. *Urges* governments to end forced sterilization of women and forced abortion, which in all cases constitute a grave violation of the woman's personal integrity and in some cases are also used for suppressing peoples and minorities;

28. *Requests* all countries to reflect the principle of equality between men and women in their legislation and take effective measures to guarantee the implementation of this principle;

29. *Also requests* the parliaments of all countries to:

- Examine their national legislation, including customary law and legal practice [.....] to ensure that the principles governing international human rights instruments are implemented [.....];
- Pursue efforts towards the establishment of family-friendly societies in order to promote the rights of members of the family, especially the rights of women and girl children in accordance with UN General Assembly resolution 50/142 [.....];

30. *Urges* parliaments and governments to devise comprehensive human rights education programmes, enlisting the assistance of political circles [.....] as well as all the players in civil society [.....], and to ensure that such programmes are implemented as part of the education system and relayed to all areas of social life;

31. *Requests* all countries to implement education curricula which include programmes for eliminating ignorance of the law and to make use of the media, in order to help women to understand their rights and exercise them through the legal system;

32. *Appeals* to parliaments and governments to condemn, and to take all possible action to ban prostitution and pornography and to enact legislation prohibiting their dissemination through the media;

33. *Calls on* parliaments and governments to develop co-operation and the exchange of experience between women representatives from international intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations [.....], in order to promote the rights of women in the family and society;

34. *Requests* all parliaments and governments to have translated into the native languages of their countries international legislation [.....] concerning human rights and especially the equality of the status and human rights of women, and to ensure the most extensive dissemination of this material in order to heighten women's awareness of their rights.

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REPORTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES: SOCIAL QUESTIONS

Advancement of women

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

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REPORTS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES
(c) Social questions - Advancement of Women

Written statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union

At the invitation of the Parliament of India, the Inter-Parliamentary Union held, from14 to 18 February 1997, in New Delhi, a Specialised Inter-Parliamentary Conference on « *Towards Partnership between Men and Women in Politics* ». The delegations to ECOSOC's substantive session of 1997 will find below extracts from the **Concluding Statement by the President of the Conference** (Mr. P. Sangma, Speaker of the Lok Sabha of India) summing up the work.

The results of the New Delhi Conference and a comparative world study entitled « ***Men and Women in Politics : Democracy Still in the Making*** », which was based on data collected from all of the world's Parliaments were presented by the Inter-Parliamentary Union to the UN Commission on the Status of Women at that body's March 1997 session. The President of IPU's Co-ordinating Committee of Women Parliamentarians had been invited to form part in the Commission's panel on women's contribution to the decision-making process.

Excerpts from the New Delhi Declaration

1. Is partnership possible between men and women in politics ? Is it a source of more full-fledged and representative democracy ? How can it be achieved ? What benefit can society as a whole derive from this new way of imagining and conducting the political administration of countries? (...)

8. As politics is deeply rooted in society and reflects dominant values, our discussions highlighted clearly that developing a partnership in politics necessarily depends on the degree of partnership as a social mode in general. This is undoubtedly why the Inter-Parliamentary Union asserts that what has to be developed, in modern democratic societies, is nothing less than a new social contract in which men and women work in equality and complementarity, enriching each other mutually from their differences.

9. To address this deficit, a major shift in the mind-set of both men and women is needed. This would generate a positive change of attitudes towards women and lead to a new balance in society at large and in politics in particular.

10. It goes without saying that women's political rights must be considered in the overall context of human rights and cannot be dissociated therefrom. Men and women politicians, governments and parliaments must pursue their efforts towards the recognition of these rights and the implementation of the international instruments which relate to them.

11. What is basically at stake is democracy itself.

12. It would appear that we are still far from a world in which the governing bodies of our political parties, which play a decisive role in political life, as well as our governments and our Parliaments are precise mirrors of our societies as regards the proportion of men and women. Nearly all delegates stated that the Constitutions of their countries provided for equality between men and women in all spheres of life. However, all those

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who spoke affirmed that, in politics, there was a huge gap between law and practice with regard to the principle of equality.

13. In different ways, many of us have however asserted that the integration of women in political life at all levels favours the democratisation of politics and that women, in turn, find that democracy offers them opportunities to become better integrated in the political process. (...)

15. Parties were asked to become more open to women and more receptive to their demands. Indeed, women find it very difficult to obtain a seat on party structures which have evolved and operate according to basically masculine criteria. (...)

17. The views on quotas were divergent. Those who favoured them stressed the need for quotas at all levels where decisions are actually taken, from parties to the national Parliament, Government and administration. It is clear to us all that quotas are only a necessary evil which should be applied on a temporary basis in order to redress the current dramatic imbalance between men and women and that they should be abolished once the desired effect has been achieved.

18. A clear consensus emerged in favour of quotas targeting candidatures rather than seats in Parliament, and in favour of them being established by parties rather than by Parliament, although the law had the advantage of making them binding on all parties. It was felt that, in order to reduce the discriminatory nature of quotas which makes them so disturbing for many of us, they should be gender neutral. (...)

20. With regard to parliamentary elections, many delegates stated that the proportional representation system or a mixed electoral system give women much greater chances of being elected than the first-past-the-post system. Political parties were, however, asked to ensure that women are well placed on electoral lists - particularly on closed lists - and that they stand in constituencies where they have a reasonable chance of being elected.

21. Parties were further asked to take measures to facilitate the equal participation of men and women in their activities, taking account of the family responsibilities of both sexes. On this subject, many speakers pointed out the importance of day-care centres and kindergartens, as well as other facilities that should be made available, enabling the requirements of both political and family life to be reconciled. The generalisation of paternity leave was also proposed.

22 Another issue which figured prominently in the debate was the fact that men and women share paid and unpaid work very unequally. It still remains true that women carry out the vast majority of the unpaid work, largely housework, whereas men carry out most of the paid work. Moreover, recent surveys indicate that women work longer hours than men. It was strongly suggested that this issue must be addressed if progress is to be achieved in women's representation in political life, which is another time-consuming activity. It was therefore suggested that proposals be placed on each national agenda to achieve a fair sharing between men and women in unpaid work.

23. As in a *leitmotiv*, women's education was mentioned in all debates (...) as one of the preconditions for the integration of more women in political life. This education should be provided for men as much as for women in order to break down patriarchal mind-sets and should start at a very early age.

24. In addition, a lengthy debate was devoted more particularly to women's political and electoral training. It goes without saying that such training is equally indispensable for men and for women, but it emerged from the debate that pre-training is required for women. This training should target three aspects.

- First of all, the exercise of citizenship (...)
- The ability to stand for election and to conduct an electoral campaign (...)
- Learning the use of parliamentary procedures so as to be able to fulfil electoral commitments.

25. Other important recommendations made during the debate, included: (...)

31. It has been said time and time again that in politics, commitment, active ongoing presence and conviction can make up for insufficient resources, including financial means, and that good media coverage does as much to win an election as large sums of money.

32. Today, the media also play a very important role in politics. No politician, man or woman, can disregard or minimise them. This is why we debated the image of women politicians in the media. As was stated by the Moderator of the lively debate on this topic between media representatives and political figures - Mrs. Dahl, the Speaker of the Swedish Parliament - our discussion was punctuated by the traditional topics of the

love-hate relationship between the media and the political class and the mutual lack of understanding as to the priorities and concerns of each side. The dominant feeling was that each side has to go some way to meet the other.

33. Emphasis was placed on the need, in particular, to provide media training for women both so that they can better understand the working and priorities of the media and also so that they can learn how to get their message across. The media in fact tend to focus on people who are identified with a cause without paying attention to their gender. On the other hand, the media were invited to look into the way they portray women in general, as well as women politicians in particular, and to adopt a new outlook. If the media are aware that integrating women in politics reinforces democracy, they should, having a crucial and increasingly important role to play in the democratic process, strive to get this message across in every possible way.

34. Our main conclusion is that it is necessary to bring about a radical change in attitudes so that the image of women politicians which is relayed by the media should not be restricted only to their identity as women but should portray them as real actors in political life.

35. Some concrete suggestions were put forward, and are summed up below: (...)

36. Several delegates referred to the importance of networking among women politicians, both nationally and regionally and to the action that senior women politicians who play a model role can take in order to encourage other women to enter the political arena.

37. It was suggested that this could be facilitated through National Commissions for Women, which should be established wherever such structures are currently lacking. (...)

38. It was recommended that every State should set up a multidisciplinary advisory board having a supervisory function to ensure that the interests and needs of women are taken into account in every field.

39. (...) it was suggested that they should create special committees in charge of monitoring national, international and regional provisions regarding the rights of women, or committees on women's affairs. Parliaments should ensure the adoption of legislation regarding the implementation of women's rights. They should also work out, together with their governments, strategies for progress to be made towards the realisation of equal partnership between men and women. Parliamentarians should also support women's NGOs.

40. The success of this Conference has encouraged us to recommend that the Inter-Parliamentary Union should do everything to ensure that broad publicity is given to these findings and their follow-up, and to increase activities to promote women's integration in political life.

41. One aspect of this integration concerns the participation of women in equal numbers with men in the work of all international bodies. (...).

42. Strengthening the Union's co-operation with the United Nations Division on the Status of Women was also proposed as a practical follow-up to the Agreement of Co-operation recently concluded between the IPU and the UN. (...)

44. In conclusion, I would like to point out that the imbalance between men and women in politics is undeniable, that a consensus between men and women has arisen here on the urgent need to remedy this situation and that practical solutions have been identified. It now remains to mobilise sustained political resolve in order to advance from words to action. This is our joint responsibility, and in the name of each and every one of you, I wish to assert here our commitment to take up this responsibility to the full. Democracy and the development of our countries are at stake.

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INTEGRATED AND COORDINATED IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP OF THE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCES AND SUMMITS

Statement submitted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization in general consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996.

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The following Declaration was adopted by consensus by the participants in the

PARLIAMENTARIANS' DAY
ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

which was organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union* on the premises of the Italian Senate in Rome on 15 November 1996.

* On 1 June 1997, National Parliaments of the following 138 sovereign States were represented in the Inter-Parliamentary Union: Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, San Marino, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe

DECLARATION

ADOPTED AT THE PARLIAMENTARIANS' DAY HELD ON THE OCCASION OF THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT

(Rome, 15 November 1996)

We, the parliamentarians gathered together in Rome on 15 November 1996 for a meeting organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the occasion of the World Food Summit and at the invitation of the Italian Parliament, declare the following:

1. We express our keen concern at a situation where close to 800 million people throughout the world, in particular in the developing countries, suffer from chronic undernutrition. It is intolerable that almost 200 million children under five suffer from protein and energy deficiencies threatening their future, most often irremediably. Unless strong measures are taken urgently, hunger and food insecurity will persist and may even worsen dramatically in some regions of the world. The problem manifests itself on a global scale, even in some of the most affluent societies. This situation is an affront to human dignity, a social disease and a threat to democracy.

2. We recognize that food insecurity - for families, regions and nations alike - has many interdependent physical, geographical, political, economic and social causes. These affect economic development and have an impact on the income of individuals and entire nations alike, although the agricultural sector is particularly concerned. In tracing the root causes of food insecurity, we place particular emphasis on poverty, which must be eradicated if the proclaimed goal of "food for all" is to be attained.

3. Whereas peace, social justice, democracy and transparent and responsible governance are all preconditions for a nation's sustained economic and social development, increasing the efficiency of agricultural and food production is the key to ensuring an adequate food supply, which should be maintained at affordable prices world-wide, but especially in low-income, food-deficit countries.

4. Food production must be environmentally friendly. To this end, there is a need to widen public and private investment in the development of appropriate technologies and enhance the effectiveness of the transfer of such technologies to rural populations via training and outreach programmes.

5. Physical constraints on agricultural production, such as lack of water control, insecure input distribution circuits and limited access to markets, should be eliminated. Economic and social policies conducive to the creation of a favourable environment for agricultural production should be adopted, notably to ensure that all farmers and in particular rural women and young people enjoy access to know-how and means of production, including land and credit. Efficient mechanisms for ensuring the food security of the population will have to be implemented, in particular as regards access to adequate food for the poorest and the constitution of sufficient reserves.

6. Attainment of food security requires sustained action at the international level in a spirit of co-operation and solidarity between nations, with due consideration given to differences between their levels of development. Such action should be aimed at the promotion of trade and enhancement of trade liberalization, realized on equitable terms, at the development of environmentally sound new technologies, protection of the planet's natural resources - in particular by promoting renewable energy and using biodiversity, at making genetic resources accessible in such a way as to guarantee the inalienable rights of the depositing nations, as well as at advancement of technical co-operation and the exchange of information. The contradiction between the needs of economic development *per se* and the imperative of making this development sustainable necessitates increased international assistance.

7. Whereas official development assistance - be it bilateral or multilateral - should be increased and restructured to take account of the needs of the agricultural sector, private investment in this sector should be likewise encouraged. Donors and financing agencies need to adopt a more radical approach towards improving the quality of development proposals that will make it possible to reverse the current downward trend of official development assistance. The amount of food aid to developing countries should be made sufficient to meet their emergency needs and be supplemented by assistance programmes which are focused on rehabilitation of the agricultural sector and are linked with social protection schemes ensuring adequate food for the poorest.

8. Reaffirming the right of all human beings to enjoy an adequate, healthy and well-balanced diet, we

   - ***endorse*** the relevant resolutions recently approved by the IPU and most particularly the resolution adopted by the 96th Inter-Parliamentary Conference in Beijing on 20 September 1996 on "Policies and strategies to ensure the right to food in this time of globalization of the economy and trade liberalization";

   - ***support*** the Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the Plan of Action adopted by the World Food Summit;

   - ***support*** the FAO Special Programme for food security in low-income, food-deficit countries, and *urge* the international community, in particular financing bodies, to associate themselves therewith;

   - ***endorse*** the "Food for All" campaign proposed by the FAO with a view to mobilizing all components of civil society in the World Food Summit follow-up, and ***undertake*** to participate fully therein as parliamentarians.

9. We ***commit*** ourselves to the task of promoting the implementation of the Summit's Plan of Action within our respective parliaments. More particularly, we undertake to:

   - ensure that sectors essential to food security, especially the agricultural sector, receive greater priority in the allocation of public funds, including official development assistance, and to see to it that these funds are used as effectively as possible;

- ensure that activities essential to food security, in particular agricultural activities, enjoy a legislative framework which is conducive to their development in an environmentally friendly manner and which guarantees that all enjoy access to the means of production, to training and information, and to an adequate, healthy and balanced diet;

- encourage our governments to adopt economic and social policies that are in full conformity with the principles and commitments of the World Food Summit;

- promote international co-operation in all forms, including the signing of international agreements, in particular with regard to international trade and access to technologies.

10. We ***urge*** the participants in the World Food Summit to give adequate attention to the present Declaration, we ***undertake*** ourselves to promote its ideas within our respective legislatures and ***request*** the Inter-Parliamentary Union to make it widely known in the world's parliaments and to set up, in co-operation with FAO, a mechanism to monitor the implementation, at parliamentary level, of the commitments taken in Rome.